

C R Y  
FROM THE  
D E A D,  
OR, THE  
G H O S T

Famous Mr. JAMES GUTHRIE, appearing.

Being the last SERMON he preached  
in the Pulpit of *Stirling*, before  
his Martyrdom at *Edinburgh*, June  
1661.

To which is added,

His last SPEECH upon the Scaffold.

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TO THE  
R E A D E R.

PERHAPS it may be thought somewhat strange, how a sermon of that great and good man, Mr. James Guthrie, once minister of Stirling, should come abroad about 77 years after his death, he having been crowned with martyrdom in the year 1661. The occasion of its seeing the light is as follows: January this same year, I had occasion to be in company with my worthy and dear father and colleague, Mr. Alexander Hamilton, in the manse of Stirling, a few days before his departure to glory. And, having heard that the sermon was in his hand, I took occasion to inquire at him about it. He told me, that it was not at present in his custody, having lent it out to a Christian friend about eighteen miles distance; but allowed me to send for it; adding, that he would be well pleased it were published. I asked him further, of the way he came by it? to which he replied, that for what he knew, it had lien in the closet of the room where he and I were sitting, since Mr. Guthrie's incumbency, until one day he fell upon it, as he was turning over some old papers, which had lien there he knew not how long.

Some days after Mr. Hamilton's death, I wrote for it accordingly. And that same authentic copy, writ, as I was told, by Mr. Guthrie's own hand,  
goes





goes to the press. The only reason of its lying so long in obscurity beside me, is the throng of other work which necessarily devolved upon me in this place, after the loss of my brother colleague, still intending, when time allowed, to say something by way of preface; but the same strait continuing upon me, I am obliged after all, through the importunate cries of many who have heard of it, to let it go with saying little or nothing. Only I regard it as a piece of honour put upon me in holy providence, not only to be the unworthy successor of that great man, but the publisher of the last sermon that ever he preached in the pulpit of Stirling; where it is my desire, the same testimony of Jesus, for which he suffered unto death, may be maintained unto the latest posterity.

What may be in the womb of this providence of the resurrection of Mr. Guthrie's last sermon in Stirling, after it has been so long buried with himself in the dust and rubbish, God only knows, and time must discover: Only considering the way of its resurrection and conveyance, it looks like A CRY FROM THE DEAD to the whole land; but in a particular manner, to the congregation of Stirling, upon whose watch-tower it was delivered.

I have thought the manner of the conveyance of this sermon to public view at this time of day, one of the curious links of the great Chain of Divine Providence. The reverend Mr. Alexander Hamilton, when he was but a youth at the college of Edinburgh, from a just regard he had to the memory of Mr. Guthrie, and the cause in which he suffered, was excited at the peril of his life to take down with his own hand Mr. Guthrie's head from the Netherbow-Port of Edinburgh, where it had stood as a

public spectacle for about twenty-seven or twenty-eight years. The very same person is ordered thirty-eight years thereafter, to succeed him in the ministry, and uphold his testimony in the pulpit of Stirling for the space of twelve years. And altho' a good many ministers, both of the presbyterian and episcopal persuasion had possessed the manse of Stirling since the death of Mr. Guthrie; yet none of them are directed to discover his farewell sermon in Stirling, until the same hand is employed, which was honoured to take down his head, and to give it a decent and honourable burial.

I make no doubt, but the above remark will appear whimsical and contemptible, as well as the sermon itself, in the eyes of a generation of men in our day, 'who are wise in their own eyes' but whatever may be the sentiments of men, 'whose minds the god of this world hath blinded;' yet the work of the Lord is honourable and glorious, and will 'be sought out of all them that have pleasure therein. Whoso is wise, and observeth these things, even they shall understand the loving-kindness of the Lord.' But how awful is the certification to those, who shut their eyes and ears against the appearances of God in his providential dispensations? Psalm xxviii. 5. 'Because they regard not the works of the Lord, nor the operations of his hand, he shall destroy them, and not build them up.'

As some have been longing and crying for the publication of this sermon: so I am apt to believe, some others will wish, that it had been buried in silence for ever. Neither needs this appear strange. His testimony when alive, tormented the men who then dwelt upon earth to that degree, as to stone  
this

## To the READER

this great Seer in Israel, and afterward to imbrue their hands in his blood: And therefore, it cannot be very easy or pleasant to those who are treading in the same steps, by attempting the burial of that cause and work of reformation for which he suffered martyrdom, to hear his voice, crying from under the altar, or his dying testimony again staring them openly in the face.

I make no doubt to say, it was the testimony of Jesus, for which this faithful martyr Mr James Guthrie suffered. What that testimony was, will partly cast up from the following papers, both of them compiled by him, when drawing nigh to eternity. The sermon was preached, August 19th, 1660, and he imprisoned the Thursday thereafter. The other paper is his speech upon the scaffold the year following. By these and his other papers and contents, contained in Mr. Wodrow's history, 'he being dead, yet speaketh' unto the living. And it will be easy for the judicious and serious reader, to discern who are in our day bearing up, and who are bearing down, and burying the cause for which he contended unto blood.

There is a loud cry raised against a few ministers, who are associated together for reformation, as if they were schismatics and separatists, though they were at first shut out and separate from their brethren, because they would not abandon the word of their testimony, emitted for the covenanted reformation of Scotland, sealed with the blood of this and many other worthies. But in my humble opinion, these only are to be deemed separatists, be they few or many, who separate from the truth, and who do not hold the Head Christ Jesus, and the order he hath established in his house. It



has been made evident in a printed act and testimony, wherein the present judicatories, and the whole land, have departed from that truth and order. The only thing demanded by these brethren, in order to a harmonious coalition, is the reformation of those corruptions, and a purging out of those scandals by which the whole lump is in hazard of being leavened. Instead of a compliance with so just and reasonable a demand, further and higher steps of defection are every year gone into, and measures laid by the last assembly, for burying them and their testimony both. Whether this be a holding fast deceit, and a refusing to return to the Lord, is easy to judge. And in this case the command is plain, Jer. xv. 19. 'Let them return unto thee, but return not thou unto them.'

When the reformation of corruptions, and the purging out of evident scandals is the only condition demanded, what can be the reason that it is not granted? One of the two it must needs be, viz. either because the judicatories will not, or else because they cannot reform. If it be because they will not, they are to be withdrawn from as wicked. If it be because they cannot, or want power, it says, the keys of discipline are taken from them, and that they are not Christ's officers and stewards. The discipline of Christ's appointment, must needs be a sufficient means for the preservation and reformation of his own house. In both these cases, the judicious power is of opinion, a church is to be separate from. The reason is plain, because she is separate from the Head, whom we are to hold at any rate, though it were to the loss of communion with the whole world.

I am apt to think, that the two horns of the above dilemma, are sufficient to overthrow Mr. Currie's voluminous essay upon separation. By which, in the opinion of many, he has destroyed these things which he formerly built up. But the fallacy and weakness of his reasonings, and the injuries he has done, both to acts of assemblies, and particular authors, I hope, in a short time, may be sufficiently exposed. Had I been favoured with a sight of the manuscript before publication, and a few hours converse with my dear brother, according to wonted intimacy and freedom, without boasting, I persuade myself, it had never seen the light. I value the man, I am sorry for his conduct; and pray for his recovery. But want of time, as was hinted above, and fear of swelling the pamphlet obliges me to forbear several other things I inclined to say.

That the same Spirit of God, and of Glory, which enabled the worthy author of the following papers to contend unto death, for the royal prerogatives of his great Master, the only Head, King, and Lawgiver of his church, may in the perusal of his following testimonies, enter into the soul of every reader, is the prayer and desire of him who is

Thine in the work of the gospel

of Christ Jesus,

Stirling, Aug. 14. 1738.

1738.

EBEN. ERSKINE.

A SER.

# S E R M O N,

Preached at Stirling, by Mr. James Guthrie,

On the Sabbath-day in the forenoon, being the 19th of August, 1660. Upon the 22d verse of the xiv. chap. of Matthew. He did also read the 23d and 24th verses of the same chapter: but had not occasion to preach any more: he being imprisoned the Thursday thereafter.

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Text. \*Math. XIV. 22, 23, 24.

*And straightway Jesus constrained his disciples to get into a ship, and to go before him unto the other side, while he sent the multitudes away. And when he had sent the multitudes away, he went up into a mountain apart to pray; and when the evening was come, he was there alone. But the ship was now in the midst of the sea, tossed with waves: for the wind was contrary.*

**I**T is of purpose, and by choice, in reference to the condition and trial of these times, we have resolved, through the Lord's assistance, to speak somewhat of this piece of trial, and of the storm wherewith the disciples of our Lord Jesus Christ were exercised at sea, and the rather we have chosen to speak somewhat of these words, because they were the choice of a very precious and worthy man,

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2 Mark vi. 46. John vi. 16.



to speak of in a day of trial, I mean, of that eminent servant of God, John Knox, whom the Lord did help to be a most eminent instrument of the work of reformation in the church; we shall not much stand on any particular unfolding of the branches of the text, but take them as they ly in order. The thing we desire you first to look to, is how the story that is recorded in these verses, is knit with these that go before, for we will find them knit together by many of the evangelists, viz. the story of the glorious miracles wrought by Jesus Christ the Lord, in feeding so many thousands of people with a few loaves, and a few little fishes, after this, that sad trial which the disciples met with at sea: They are knit by the evangelists Matthew, Mark and John, after that the Lord Jesus Christ had preached to the people and his disciples, and had fed many thousands with a few loaves, and a few fishes, and had manifested much of his power and glory, (he constrained his disciples to get into a ship, and to go before him unto the other side, while he sent the multitude away,) he sends his disciples to the sea, and the multitude away, that they should not for a season hear any more of his doctrine, nor see any more of his miracles.

That we may lay a foundation for somewhat for your edification. First, It may be enquired, Why it is, that he sends away both his disciples and the multitude at that time, and would have an interruption of his doctrine and miracles, when he sends his disciples to the sea, and the multitude to their own home? If we look into the other evangelists, we will find the causes there enough, Mark vi. 52. the cause is given there, why he thus exercised his disciples; For they considered not the miracle of the loaves, for their hearts were hardened, Albeit, the Lord Jesus Christ had revealed much of his power

power and glory in the miracle of the loaves; yet his disciples did not duly consider thereof: Therefore he would needs exercise them with a storm, and a tempest at sea, that they might both be taught in the knowledge of their own weakness, and also, might be better schooled in the faith of his power and glory. The reason why 'he sent the multitude away,' is set down in the gospel written by John, chap. vi. 26. When the multitude comes again, 'Verily, verily, I say unto you, ye seek me, not because ye saw the miracles, but because ye did eat of the loaves, and were filled.' Compare it with that in the 15th verse, 'When Jesus Christ therefore perceived that they would come and take him by force, to make him a king, he departed again into a mountain himself alone.' He knew, that for all that they had seen and heard of his word and miracles, they were of a very carnal disposition, and seeking to establish to themselves carnal prosperity and peace: therefore he sent them away for a time.

From the connection of these two histories, and from the scope of the whole, we offer you one point of doctrine; that the Lord Jesus Christ is oft times, and ordinarily pleased after special manifestations of his power and glory in his church, and amongst his people to exercise them with special pieces of trial, and troubles, and storms. After his doing of great work for their comfort, he is ordinarily pleased, to raise great and dreadful storms and tempests, for their exercise and trial. So here, when he hath in a most comfortable and kindly way, banqueted them, and revealed much of his power and love in so doing, he sends them a storm and tempest, on the back of it, and will have an interruption of his doctrine and miracles for a time, wherein they are all like to be drowned.

1st *Instance.* There are many instances in the word, of the Lord's dealing thus; look in the books of Moses, what follows on the back of that glorious deliverance, that the Lord gave to the people of Israel out of Egypt; they are exercised 40 years in the wilderness, in which they had many a sad day, ere they entered the land of Canaan.

2d *Inst.* The like we may see in the church of Israel. 1 Sam. vii. The Lord gave a great deliverance from the Philistines by the ministry of his servant Samuel, and a glorious blessed work of reformation there was, but all that was again destroyed by the hand of Saul, and persecution raised against the church of God.

3 *Inst.* A third instance ye will find, if ye will read the history of the reign of Hezekiah and Manasseh kings of Judah, as it is recorded in the second book of Chronicles; there was a great reformation in the days of Hezekiah, a covenant sworn by the king, princes, priests, and the whole body of the land; all corruption cast out, the pure worship and ordinances of God set up, but there was a dreadful trial by the hand of Sennacherib; scarcely was Hezekiah well in his grave, till Manasseh succeeds in his room, and brings in corruption and persecution, both at once.

4th *Inst.* A fourth instance was in the days of Josiah, how much of the power, and glory of the Lord is manifested; but how sad a trial comes on the back of it, that the church seems to be wholly defaced by the king of Babylon.

5th *Inst.* A fifth instance we will find, after the return of Israel out of Babylon; in the iv. of Ezra, the foundation of the Lord's house is laid; but in a little while the work interrupted, till the second year of Darius the king, by the derision and enmity of wicked men.

6th *Inst.*



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6th *Inst.* A like instance you shall also find in the New Testament; look what a length our blessed Lord brought the work of the gospel, but what follows in the xvi. of John, 31st and 32d verses, 'Do ye now believe? Behold the hour cometh, yea, is now come, that ye shall be scattered, every man to his own, and shall leave me alone.' And he is crucified, and laid in his grave, and a stone laid on the grave's mouth, and little appearance that ever there should have been more mention of him, in the land of the living.

7th *Inst.* Then look another instance in the days of the apostles, in the i, ii, iii, iv, and v. chapters of the acts, what a blessed reformation there was; but in the close of the vi. chapter, and in the beginning of the viiith, ye see what a sad interruption and scattering there is in the church, and a great persecution raised against it.

8th *Inst.* And as there are many instances in the word, so there are many instances in the story of the church, many great things were done by the apostles, and a glorious reformation there was in the bringing in of the Gentiles; but how dreadful a persecution is raised through all the world.

9th *Inst.* And there is a notable instance, when the Lord began to reform the church from the darkness of Popery, by that worthy instrument Luther: but shortly after, did not Charles the fifth raise a cruel war, against all the princes of Germany, and raise cruel edicts against all that clave to the church?

10th *Inst.* And also, in the days of king Edward the sixth, that good prince, what a glorious work was in England; but a few years after that godly prince died, queen Mary succeeds, brings in Popery, and raises a bitter persecution against the saints of God.

11th *Inst.* And ye cannot be so great strangers to

to your own condition at home; how sad an interruption the work of reformation met with, from the Prelates not long ago.

So that there is nothing more ordinary in the church, than after the Lord has communicate himself in a special way in his power and glory, than to exercise them with sad storms and tempests on the back of it.

Concerning this dispensation, we would first, enquire a little into the grounds and reasons of it, why the Lord sees it fit to do so. Next, into the kinds of it, or in what several ways it is, that he sees it fit to do so?

For the reasons, grounds, and causes of it, we shall not speak of many, though many might be spoken of; but shortly touch some of the most common and obvious.

*1st Reason.* First, The Lord makes such a changing of his dealing with his church, for the chastising of their sin, and correcting of their iniquity. A people to whom he manifests himself in his power and glory, and mercy and truth, do not always behave themselves as they ought to do, but even while he is dealing kindly with them, they do many ways provoke him to wrath. Therefore God, for correcting their sin, and chastising their iniquity, brings troubles and storms upon them. In the xcix Psalm, the Lord is brought to take vengeance on the inventions of his people in the wilderness; that ye may understand this the better, look the lxxviii. Psalm, which is a clear commentary to this where his rod wherewith he punished that people in the wilderness, and delayed their entrance into Canaan, and their sin both are set down: their professedness in the Lord's covenant. Ye may look some of the proofs of these sins.

*1st Sin.* First, In the 10th and 11th verses of  
B Psalm

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*Psalms lxxviii.* They kept not the covenant of God; and refused to walk in his law; and forgot his works, and wonders that he had shewed them. They were unstedfast in the Lord's covenant. In the xix. and xx. chapters of Exodus, they entered into a most solemn covenant with God, that all of them undertook to stand to, and to prove faithful therein; but they kept not his covenant, but dealt deceitfully in it, therefore he brought such storms on them in the wilderness, and so long suspended their entrance into the promised land.

2d *Sin.* A second sin is, in the 18th verse, they sinned yet more, and tempted him in their hearts, by asking meat for their lusts. They are not satisfied with the things that God has allowed them, but lusted after strange things, and became lustful in their appetites: therefore God is wroth, and thus exerciseth them in the wilderness.

3d *Sin.* A third sin is, in the 22d verse, their diffidence and unbelief; they believed not God, and trusted not in his salvation; they put tempting questions, concerning his power and goodness in the 19th verse, 'can God furnish a table in the wilderness?' Therefore he thus exercised them with storms.

4th *Sin.* A fourth sin is, they despised and undervalued the precious manna, which God sent down from heaven, for feeding of them, Numb. xxi. 5. 'Our souls lothed this light bread.'

5th *Sin.* A fifth sin is, their murmuring, grudging, and repining against God.

6th *Sin.* A sixth sin is, their complaint of coming out of Egypt; their rebellion and speaking of a captain to return back again.

7th *Sin.* The last sin is, their corrupting the worship of God, and making a golden calf. And because of these sins, the Lord is angry and correcteth



recteth and chastiseth them forty years long in the wilderness.

**2d Reason.** A second reason is, the Lord's bringing sad storms on the back of glorious manifestations of himself in his word and works, is, for purging of his people. As he will correct them, and have them to know the bitterness of their sin, so he will have them to be purged of it. There is a sad trial in the xi. of Daniel, and this is given as the reason of it; to purge, to try, and to make white, in the 35th verse, 'And some of them of understanding shall fall, to try them, and to purge, and to make them white, even to the time of the end: because it is yet for a time appointed.' There is in the church and people of God, much dross, therefore he sees it necessary, they be put to the fire, for purging away their dross.

**3d Reason.** A third reason wherefore the Lord brings sad storms, on the back of glorious manifestations of himself, is, for discovering and bringing forth the hypocrites, and such as are unsound, Daniel xi. 34. Many cleave to the Lord's people by flattery; especially, it is so, when the Lord is eminently appearing, and revealing himself gloriously in his word and works; many then undertake a profession, in whose hearts there is no sincerity and truth; many then cleave to the cause and work of God by flattery, which his soul cannot endure; therefore he brings a winnowing fan, and sets them up before the wind, that he may know who is chaff and who is corn. Psalm cxxv. 4, 5. 'He doth good to those that are upright in heart;' but 'as for such as turn aside to crooked ways, the Lord shall lead them forth with the workers of iniquity.' Therefore for discovery of such, he sends sad storms on the back of reformation.

Another reason of the Lord's bringing sad storms

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and tempests on his people, on the back of glorious manifestations of himself, is, that he may prove and take a trial of the integrity, faith, and patience of his saints; and in trying them to purchase glory to himself, and a name to them. 1 Pet. i. 7.

\* That the trial of your faith (being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire), might be found unto praise, and honour, and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ.

There is also a reason, concerning adversaries, which we shall not now meddle with.

But we come to the second point, How it is, or in what several sorts of ways it is, that the Lord is pleased thus to dispense, I mean, to send storms and trials on his servants and people, immediately on the back of some glorious appearance, and notable works of kindness and mercy amongst them. There might be a great many ways named, how the Lord is pleased to do thus; we shall name only four generals.

1<sup>st</sup> Way. First, He does it sometimes by the interrupting of his work. Thus he did it in that place cited before, Ezra iv. After the foundation of the Lord's house is laid, a company of malignant men, enemies to the poor people of God, and his work, who are exceeding ill satisfied that the work of God should prosper, they come by all means to interrupt the work of God: and when they could not prevail by flattery, they go to the king of Persia, and lead the people of God with false aspersions, that they were about to rebel, &c. by which suggestions, they obtain letters from the king, commanding them to cease building of the temple, and when the copy of the king's letter was read, they made them to cease by force and power, &c.

2<sup>d</sup> Way. A second way is, by corruption, when he suffers evil instruments, not only to make an interrupt-

terruption, but to make a corruption, so to speak, and to mingle these with the purity of his ordinances and worship. God raises up ill instruments, to make the people lick up the vomit of these corruptions, which have been formerly cast out. There had been a blessed reformation in the days of Hezekiah, and all corruption cast out, but all that corruption is brought in again in the days of Manasseh, and more and worse than ever had been before.

3d Way. A third way is, by destruction, so to speak; not only when the work of reformation is interrupted, and corrupted, but when it is destroyed and taken away. There is in the days of Zedekiah, a total destroying of the temple, and all the work.

4th Way. A fourth way is, by persecution to these that cleave to the truth and work of God. Thus it was in the days of the apostles, Acts v. They fall on the ministers of the Lord's house, and slay some of them with the sword, and put others in prison; 'so that they could not preach the word in Jerusalem.' Some one, or all of these ways, the Lord sets on foot such dispensations.

1st Use. We would now speak somewhat of the use we would make of it. And, first; It says this to us, that we of this church and nation would be looking for a storm: The Lord hath been graciously pleased to make glorious discoveries of his power and mercy in his word and works amongst us, now these many years, and even on that account, we would be looking for a storm: And we shall give you these few reasons wherefore we would look for it.

1st Reason. Because, as I told you, it is ordinary with God in his dispensations to his people, to knit these two together, with great manifestations of his mercy, to bring troubles, tempests, and trials, as ye will find frequently in the word.



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*2d Reason.* A second reason wherefore we would look for a storm, is, because we are guilty of these sins, that bring on storms on the church, and people of God. We have told you what storms came on Israel in the wilderness, after their coming out of Egypt; and we have told you their sin that brought them on; unstedfastness in the Lord's covenant, murmuring against God, tempting of God, diffidence and unbelief; despising and loathing of the precious manna, their rebelling against God, their corrupting of the worship and ordinances of God, &c. See if we be not guilty of all these sins: Have we not been unstedfast in the covenant? is not the obligation thereof in a great measure forgotten? and who has remembered to perform his vow unto the Lord, almost in any thing, either in the national, or solemn league and covenant? Are we not guilty of lusting, and not satisfied with the things that God has given us, but the heart is carried away with the lust of the eyes, the lust of the flesh, and the pride of life? are we not guilty of repining against God? Are we not guilty of despising and loathing the precious manna of the gospel? Are we not guilty of misbelief and tempting of God? Are we not guilty of corrupting of the ordinances of God, and spoiling many of his precious truths? And are there not many speaking of making a captain to return again to Egypt, and to involve themselves in the bondage of all these corruptions, which have been formerly cast out, and engaged against in the covenant; and if for these things God brought storms on them, how shall we avoid them.

*3d Reason.* A third thing that says there is a storm coming, is, because these amongst whom he doth eminently manifest himself, he doth also eminently try them, that he may bring forth their faith

and patience. We have had trials, but none of us have resisted unto blood, they have been but fresh-water trials: The trials are not answerable to these eminent dispensations enjoyed. We have but run with the foot-men, and have not yet contended with the horse-men, we have not yet swimm'd in the swellings of Jordan, Jer. xii. 5.

*4th Reason.* A fourth thing that says that there is a storm coming, is, because that there is among us a huge multitude of hollow hearted men, joined in the covenant with treacherous hearts, the Lord hath brought forth many of these already, but it is like, there will be more visible discoveries, that will make men disown and disavow the covenant of God.

*5th Reason.* Another thing that says ye would look for a storm, is, because that it is already begun; the wind of the Lord's fan is beginning to blow; severals who were eminent in the work of the Lord are imprisoned; severall ambassadors of the Lord's house cast out; and doth not this say that there is a storm coming.

*6th Reason.* Lastly, This says, that ye would look for a storm, because all the wicked, and these that have been enemies to the people of God are already lifting up the head; and that is ay the prognostic of a storm.

*Use 2.* The second use is, as we would look for a storm, so we would not stumble at it when it comes, because it is the work of our God, it is the ordinary path road that the Lord uses to take or give in his dispensations to his church and people, all of them we would beware of.

*Stumbling 1.* The first stumbling of the children of Israel that we read of, when storms were like to rise, they stumble so far as to speak of quitting the work of the Lord, and not marching on further to take possession of the promised land; And they  
speak

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Speak of making a captain to return back again to Egypt: We would fear that that should be the stumbling of many in these times, that they shall take a resolution to quit all the work of God, and the work of reformation, and be content to be carried back again to these corruptions from whence they were, by the mercy of God, delivered. That is a most dreadful stumbling; we warn you of it, and we beseech you in the name of the Lord to take heed to it.

*Stumbling 2.* A second sort of stumbling that we would beware of, is, the stumbling of Doeg the Edomite, 2 Sam. xxii. when a storm was like to arise upon the church and people of God, he stumbles so far at these things, as he falls to be an accuser of those that had been employed in the work of God, and walked in their integrity, to accuse honest holy David; and from an accuser came to be an open persecutor of the people of God. We would take heed, that for currying favour to ourselves, we be not accusers of others, this is the way of many in these nations, they know no other way of currying favour to themselves, but by becoming accusers of the saints of God: Look to it, for in a while ye will turn open persecutors: When none would fall on the priests of the Lord, Doeg the Edomite, ere he would lose the favour he had gotten, fell on them.

*Stumbling 3.* A third sort of stumbling that we would beware of, is, the stumbling of Shebna, treasurer or scribe, Isa. xxii. when Sennacherib, invaded Judah, though he pretended friendship, yet he in a secret way complied with Sennacherib, and so far as in him lay, supplanted good king Hezekiah, and the people of God; we would take heed of that.

*Stumbling 4.* Another sort of stumbling that we would



would beware of, is, that stumbling of Demas; 2. Tim. iv. 10. who when a storm arose, he thought it meet to shift for himself, and embrace this present world. 'Demas has forsaken us, says Paul, 'having loved this present world, and is departed 'unto Thessalonica.' Look we pray you in this place, to that which is most like to be your temptation, viz. The lust of the things of the world; if ye will prove stedfast in the cause that ye have owned, and therefore we would study to have our hearts loosed from these things that will make you stumble in a stormy day.

*Stumbling 5.* Another sort of stumbling that we would beware of, is, the stumbling of Baruch, Jer. xlv. 3. when he and Jeremiah were like to be put to death, for the cause that they were engaged unto, he fainted and was afraid. 'What is me,' says he 'for the Lord has added grief to my sorrow, I 'fainted in my sighing, and I find no rest.' We would take heed that we faint not, neither be of a fearful heart, own the cause of God, and interest of Jesus Christ. Yea, that carnal fear carries Peter so far as to deny his Lord and Master.

*Stumbling 6.* We would beware of the stumbling of Judas, who, when he got the thing he would have been at, by the following of Jesus Christ, he resolves to betray his Master. Look that disappointments in following the cause of Christ, make you not turn treacherous unto it.

And *Lastly*, We would beware of the stumbling of the men of Judah, Jer. xlv. Jeremiah would have had them staying in the land of Judah, and they would not, but would go down to the land of Egypt. And they tell him, 'It was better with us 'when we burnt incense to the queen of heaven, 'and poured out drink-offerings unto her, for then 'had we plenty of victuals, and were well, and saw

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no evil? We would take heed, that nothing make us to call in question the cause of God, that we have been engaged in.

*Use 3.* A third use, If it be so, that tempests and storms are like to blow, then we would be careful to prepare for them.

A few things we would name, that we would look to, for preparing of us.

1. We would study to have our ship as light of all unnecessary burdens, as we can; I mean, all things of a present world, all things beside God, and our precious souls; we would have as little weight of these things on our spirits as we may, for they will sink our ship in a storm.

2. We would be careful to make friendship with Jesus Christ that blessed pilot, that we may get him in the ship with us, for we are not able to steer our ship in a storm.

3. We would be careful to keep a low sail, to have our spirits humble and low before the Lord, for the humble soul is most like to hold out, when the wind and storm blow.

4. We would be careful to get the knowledge of the cause that we profess; for indeed a dark night is ill to sail in, when the wind blows, and when there are quick sands before us.

*And Lastly.* We would be careful to have our ship well ballasted with the faith and patience of the saints.

*Use 4.* We would consider what grounds of consolation we shall have for strengthening our hearts, if we abide fast by the cause of Jesus Christ, for the hiding out of a storm, if so be, God be pleased to bring it on us.

We might name many, only at this time take these few. The first ground of encouragement, is, that you have a good cause, I mean the cause of  
God

God, and the interest of Jesus Christ, speak against it who will, forsake it who will, reproach it who will, doubtless good is the cause, the cause is worth the contending for, worth the suffering any thing that can come for it.

2. Another thing to be a ground of comfort to us, is, as we have a good cause, so we have a good Captain too, Jesus Christ the Lord, who is the Captain and Prince of salvation, who was never put to the worse, and who sits at the right hand of the Father, and will reign there till he make all his enemies his footstool.

3. Another thing to be a ground of consolation to us, is, as we have a good cause, and a good Captain, so we have good company too, all in whose hearts the fear of the Lord is, in these three nations, yea, more, we have all the saints that have lived since the beginning of the world; for all the causes they have owned and suffered for, is one and the same, though there be sundry branches of it; we have also our own experiences, and many things more of that kind. O that we knew our privileges, for strengthening our hearts to be sincere and steadfast in his work. And so we close.

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Mr. JAMES GUTHRIE'S  
last SPEECH upon the Scaffold,  
June 1st, 1661.

MEN and brethren, I fear many of you are come hither to gaze, rather than to be edified by the carriage and last words of a dying man: But if any have an ear to hear, as I hope some of this great concourse have, I desire your  
audience



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audience in a few words. I am come hither to lay down this earthly tabernacle and mortal flesh of mine, and I bless God, through his grace, I do it willingly, and not by constraint. I say, I suffer willingly: If I had been so minded, I might have made a diversion, and not been a prisoner; but being conscious to myself of nothing worthy of death, or of bonds, I would not stain my innocency with the suspicion of guiltiness, by withdrawing; neither have I wanted opportunities and advantages to escape since I was a prisoner, not by the fault of my keepers, God knoweth, but otherwise; but neither for this had I light or liberty, lest I should reflect upon the Lord's name, and offend the generation of the righteous: And if some men have not been mistaken, or dealt deceitfully in telling me so, I might have avoided not only the severity of the sentence, but also had much favour and countenance, by complying with the courses of the times. But I durst not redeem my life with the loss of my integrity: God knoweth, I durst not; and that since I was a prisoner, he hath so holden me by the hand, that he never suffered me to bring it in debate in my inward thoughts, much less to propound or hearken to any overture of that kind. I did judge it better to suffer, than to sin: And therefore, I am come hither to lay down my life this day, and I bless God, I die not as a fool; not that I have any thing therein to glory in myself: I acknowledge that I am a sinner, yea, one of the greatest and vilest that have owned a profession of religion, and one of the most unworthy that have preached the gospel. My corruptions have been strong and many, and have made me a sinner in all things, yea, even in following my duty; and therefore, righteousness have I none of my own, all is vile. But I do believe, that Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners,

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‘ sinners, whereof I am chief:’ through faith in his righteousness and blood have I obtained mercy; and through him, and in him alone, have I the hope of a blessed conquest and victory over sin and Satan, and hell and death, and that I shall attain unto the resurrection of the just, and be made partaker of eternal life. ‘ I know in whom I have believed, and that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day.’ I have preached salvation through his name, and as I have preached, so do I believe, and do commend the riches of his free grace and faith in his name unto you all, as the only way whereby ye can be saved.

And, as I bless the Lord, that I die not as a fool; so also, that I die not for evil-doing. Not a few of you may haply judge that I suffer as a thief, or as a murderer, or as an evil-doer, or as a busy-body in other men’s matters. It was the lot of the Lord Jesus Christ himself, and hath been of many of his precious servants, and people, to suffer by the world as evil-doers; and as my soul feareth not at it, but desireth to rejoyce in being brought into conformity with my blessed head, and so blessed a company, in this thing; so I desire and pray, that I may be to none of you to day, upon this account, a stone of stumbling, or a rock of offence. Blessed is he that shall not be offended at Jesus Christ, and his poor servants and members, because of their being condemned as evil-doers by the world. God is my record, that in these things for which sentence of death hath passed against me, I have a good conscience. I bless God, they are not matters of compliance with sectaries, or designs, or practices, against his majesty’s person or government, or the person and government of his royal father. My heart, I bless God, is conscious to no disloyalty, nay, loyal I have been, and I commend it to you to be

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loyal, and obedient in the Lord. True piety is the foundation of true loyalty: A wicked man may be a flatterer, and a time-server, but he will never be a loyal subject. But to return to my purpose; the matters for which I am condemned, are matters belonging to my calling and function, as a minister of the gospel, such as the discovery and reproving of sin, the pressing and the holding fast of the path of God in the covenant, and preserving and carrying on the work of religion and reformation according thereto, and denying to acknowledge the civil magistrate, as the proper competent immediate judge, in causes ecclesiastical: That in all these things, which God so ordering by his gracious providence, are the grounds of my indictment and death, I have a good conscience, as having walked therein according to the light and rule of God's word, and as did become a minister of the gospel.

I do also bless the Lord, that I do not die as one not desired. I know, that by not a few, I neither have been, nor am desired. It has been my lot to be a man of contention and sorrow; but it is my comfort, that for my own things I have not contended, but for 'the things of Jesus Christ!' for what relateth to his interest and work, and the well-being of his people. In order to the preserving and promoting of these, I did protest against, and stood in opposition to these late assemblies at St. Andrews, Dundee, and Edinburgh, and the public resolutions for bringing the malignant party into the judicatories, and armies of this kingdom, conceiving the same contrary to the word of God, and to our solemn covenant engagements; and to be an in-let to the defections, and to the ruin, and destruction of the work of God. And it is now manifest to many consciences, that I have not been therein mistaken, nor was not fighting against a  
man



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man of straw. I was also desirous, and did use some poor endeavours, to have the church of God purged of insufficient, scandalous, and corrupt ministers and elders; for these things, I have been mistaken by some, and hated by others. But I bless the Lord, as I had the testimony of my own conscience, so I was, and am therein approven in the consciences of many of the Lord's precious servants and people; and however so little I may die desired by some, yet by these I know I do die desired, and their approbation and prayers, and affection is of more value with me, than the contradiction, or reproach, or hatred of many others; the love of the one, I cannot recompense, and the mistake, or hatred, or reproach of the other, I do with all my heart forgive; and wherein I have offended any of them, I do beg their mercy and forgiveness. I do from my soul wish, that my death may be profitable unto both; that the one may be confirmed and established in the straight ways of the Lord; and that the other, if the Lord so will, may be convinced, and cease from these things that are not good, and do not edify but destroy.

One thing I would warn you all of, that God is wroth, yea, very wroth with Scotland, and threatneth to depart and remove his candlestick. The causes of his wrath are many, and would to God it were not one great cause, that causes of wrath are despised and rejected of men. Consider the cause that is recorded. Jer. xxxvi. and the consequence of it, and tremble and fear. I cannot but also say, that there is a great addition and increase of wrath; 1. By that deluge of profanity that overfloweth all the land, and hath reins loosed unto it every where, in so far that many have lost, not only all use and exercise of religion, but even of morality, and that common civility which is to be found amongst

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the heathen. 2. By that horrible treachery and perjury that is in the matter of the covenant, and cause of God, and work of reformation: 'Be astonished, O ye heavens, at this, and be ye horribly afraid, and be ye very desolate, saith the Lord; for my people have committed two great evils, they have forsaken me, the fountain of living waters, and have hewed them out cisterns, broken cisterns, that can hold no waters.' Shall he break the covenant and prosper? Shall the throne of iniquity which frameth mischief by a law, have fellowship with God? I fear the Lord be about to bring a sword on these lands, which shall avenge the quarrel of his covenant. 3. Horrible ingratitude, the Lord after ten years oppression, and bondage, hath broken the yoke of strangers from off our necks: but what do we render to him for this goodness? Most of the fruit of our delivery is, to work wickedness, and to strengthen ourselves to do evil. 4. A most dreadful idolatry, and sacrificing to the creature, we have 'changed the glory of the incorruptible God, into the image of corruptible man,' in whom many have placed almost all their salvation and desire, and have turned that which might have been a blessing unto us, (being kept in a due line of subordination under God) into an idol of jealousy, by preferring it before him. God is also wroth with a generation of carnal, corrupt, time-serving ministers; I know, and bear testimony, that in the church of Scotland, there is a true and faithful ministry: Blessed be God, we have yet many who study their duty, and desire to be found faithful to their Lord and Master; and I pray you to honour, and reverence, and esteem much of these for their work's sake; and I pray them to be encouraged in their Lord and Master, who is with them, to make them as iron pillars and brazen walls, and as a strong

*last SPEECH upon the Scaffold.* 29

strong defended city in the faithful following of their duty: But, Oh! that there were not too many, who mind 'earthly things,' and 'are enemies' to the cross of Jesus Christ,' who push with the side and shoulder, who strengthen the hands of evil doers, who make themselves transgressors, by studying to build again what they did formerly warrantably destroy; I mean Prelacy, and the ceremonies and the Service-book, a mystery of iniquity that works amongst us, whose steps lead unto the house of the great whore Babylon, 'the mothe of fornication;' or whosoever else he be that buildeth this Jericho again, let him take heed of the curse of Hiel, the Beth-elite, and of that flying roll threatened, Zech. v. And let all ministers take heed that they watch, and be stedfast in the faith, and quit themselves like men, and be strong; and give faithful and seasonable warning concerning sin and duty. Many of the Lord's people do sadly complain of the fainting and silence of many watchmen, and it concerneth them to consider what God calleth for at their hands in such a day: Silence now in a watchman, when he is so much called to speak, and give his testimony, upon the perill of his life, is doubtless a great sin. The Lord open the mouths of his servants, to speak his word with all boldness, that covenant-breaking may be discovered and reprov'd, and that the kingdom of Jesus Christ may not be supplanted, nor the souls of his people be destroyed without a witness. I have but a few words more to add; all that are profane amongst you, I exhort them to repentance, for the day of the Lord's vengeance hasteneth, and is near; but there is yet a door of mercy open for you, if you will not despise the day of salvation. All that are maligners, and reproachers, and persecuters of godliness, and of such as live godly, take heed what



ye do; it will be hard for you to kick against the pricks; you make yourselves the butt of the Lord's fury, and his flaming indignation, if you do not cease from, and repent of all your hard speeches, and ungodly deeds. All that are neutral, and indifferent, and lukewarm professors, be zealous and repent, lest the Lord 'spue you out of his mouth.' You that lament after the Lord, and mourn for all the abominations that are done in this city, and in the land, and take pleasure in the stones and dust of Zion, cast not away your confidence, but be comforted, and encouraged in the Lord; he will yet appear to your joy: God hath not cast away his people, nor work in Britain and Ireland, I hope it shall once more revive by the power of his Spirit, and take root downward, and bear fruit upward, and of this I am now confident. There is yet a holy seed and precious remnant, whom God will preserve and bring forth; but how long or dark our night may be, I do not know, the Lord shorten it for the sake of his chosen. In the mean while, be ye patient, and 'stedfast, unmoveable, always 'abounding in the work of the Lord,' and in love one to another; beware of snares which are strawed thick; cleave to the covenant and work of reformation; do not decline the cross of Christ; 'choose 'rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, 'than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season,' and 'account the reproach of Christ greater riches, 'than all the treasures of the world.' Let my death grieve none of you, it will be more profitable and advantageous both for me and for you, and for the church of God, and for Christ's interest and honour, than my life could have been. I forgive all men the guilt of it, and I desire you to do so also: 'Pray 'for them that persecute you, and bless them that 'curse you; bless, I say, and curse not.' I die in  
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*last* SPEECH upon the Scaffold. 31

the faith of the Apostles, and primitive Christians, and Protestant reformed churches, particularly of the church of Scotland, whereof I am a member and minister. I do bear my witness and testimony to the doctrine, worship, discipline, and government of the church of Scotland, by kirk-sessions, presbyteries, synods, and general assemblies; Popery and Prelacy, and all the trumpery of service and ceremonies, that wait upon them, I do abhor. I do bear my witness unto the national covenant of Scotland, and solemn league and covenant betwixt the three kingdoms of Scotland, England, and Ireland; These sacred, solemn, public oaths of God, I believe cannot be loosed, nor dispensed with, by any person, or party, or power upon earth; but are still binding upon these kingdoms, and will be for ever hereafter, and are ratified and sealed by the conversion of many thousand souls, since our entering thereunto. I bear my witness to the protestation against the contraverted assemblies, and the public resolutions, to the testimonies given against the sectaries, against the course of backsliding and defection that is now on foot in the land, and all the branches and parts thereof, under whatsoever name or notion, or acted by whatsoever party or person. And in the last place, I bear my witness to the cross of Jesus Christ, and that I never had cause, nor have cause this day to repent, because of any thing I have suffered, or can now suffer for his name: I take God to record upon my soul, I would not exchange this scaffold with the palace or mitre of the greatest Prelate in Britain. Blessed be God, who hath shewed mercy to such a wretch, and hath revealed his son in me, and hath made me a minister of the everlasting gospel, and that he hath deigned, in the midst of such contradiction, from Satan and the world, to seal my ministry upon the  
hearts

hearts of not a few of his people, and especially in  
 the station wherein I was last, I mean the congre-  
 gation and presbytery of Stirling; and I hope the  
 Lord will visit that congregation and presbytery once  
 more, with faithful pastors. God forgive the poor  
 empty man, that did there intrude upon my labours,  
 and hath made a prey of many poor souls, and ex-  
 posed others to reproach and oppression, and a fa-  
 mine of the word of the Lord. God forgive the  
 misleaders of that part of the poor people, who  
 tempted them to reject their own pastor, and to ad-  
 mit of intruders; and the Father of mercies pity  
 that poor misled people; and the Lord visit the  
 congregation and presbytery of Stirling once more  
 with faithful pastors, and grant that the work and  
 people of God may be revived through all Britain,  
 and over all the world. Jesus Christ is my light,  
 and my life, my righteousness, my strength, and  
 my salvation, and all my desire: Him, O him, I  
 do with all the strength of my soul commend unto  
 you: Blessed are they that are not offended in  
 him: Blessed are they that trust in him. Bless  
 him, O my soul, from henceforth, even for ever.  
 Rejoice, rejoice, all ye that love him, be patient,  
 and rejoice in tribulation: Blessed are you, and  
 blessed shall you be for ever and ever; everlast-  
 ing righteousness and eternal salvation is yours:  
 All is yours, and ye are Christ's and Christ is  
 God's. Remember me, O Lord, with the fa-  
 vour thou bearest to thy people; O visit me with  
 thy salvation, that I may see the good of thy cho-  
 sen, that I may rejoice in the good of thy nation,  
 that I may glory with thine inheritance. Now,  
 let thy servant depart in peace, since mine eyes  
 have seen thy salvation.

